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NAVAIR team effort saves government money



By Renee Hatcher

NAVAIR Public Affairs

NAVAIR's Support/Commercial Derivative Aircraft Program (PMA-207) accepted on Aug. 29 a completely refurbished fuel tank to be used for aerial refueling in the Marine Corp's newest tanker, the KC-130J.

PMA-207 is leading the effort that will save the government millions of dollars by salvaging fuel tanks from retired C-130 tankers, refurbishing them and then converting them to the new J-model configuration. The old tanks are taken apart, put back together again with new pumps and electrical assemblies, and finished with a fresh coat of paint.

"We are taking these old tanks, making them like new and extending their service lives," said Tom Bly, of PMA-207.

NAVAIR can refurbish one tank for about \$50,000. The cost of purchasing a brand new tank would be about \$1 million. The goal is to eventually refurbish 50 tanks.



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The C-130 Fleet Support Team at NAVAIR Cherry Point provides the engineering and logistics support for this effort. The FST developed the engineering specification that provides the refurbishment/conversion instructions. The NAVAIR Support Equipment Rework Facility at Solomons is performing the work.

"This is part of our commitment to the warfighter to use the extraordinary facilities and resources of NAVAIR, and provide superior naval aviation technologies," Bly said.

The tank that was accepted Thursday is ready-for-issue and is planned for installation in the next KC-130J scheduled for delivery. Refurbished tanks will be sent to the Lockheed Martin production facility in Marietta, Ga. and installed in J-models. There are two other tanks currently at the Solomons facility; one is near completion and the other should be ready-for-issue in about two months.

Locked into the rear of the aircraft, the tanks carry 3,600 gallons of jet fuel for offloading to receiver aircraft. The Navy/Marine Corps have contracted with Lockheed Martin for 13 KC-130Js. Nine have been delivered and are now in the developmental test phase.

(For more information about this release, call Renee Hatcher at 301-757-5138.)

Photo by Renee Hatcher

Chuck Overman, of the C-130 Fleet Support Team at NAVAIR Cherry Point, looks at new electrical assemblies on the first completely refurbished KC-130J 3,600-gallon fuselage fuel tank completed by the NAVAIR Support Equipment Rework Facility at Solomons. Brian Jones, left, NAVAIR SEFAC Solomons, and Dale Hoffert, PMA-207, look on.